FIRST

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

PARISH ASSOCIATION

OF THE

HOUSE OF PRAYER.

BRANCHTOWN, PHILADELPHIA

1884

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THE Annual Meeting of the Parish Association of the House of Prayer, postponed from January, calls us together this evening to review its work and receive the Reports of the different Committees. As its President, I would, on behalf of the Association, return heartfelt thanks to God for the signal manner in which He has owned and blessed its labors. The regular meetings have been held, at which time the Committees have reported the result of their work. To the Annual Reports presented, I deem it wise to furnish a statement of my parochial acts. The services of the Church have been held twice each Sunday during the year, and the Wednesday evening lecture delivered regularly, with the exception of the warm season. Sermons were preached by different clergymen during Lent, and the Christmas and Thanksgiving service held, as is always the custom. I cannot say that the attendance upon the services has been what it should: some are always present whenever the opportunity offers, others are irregular, and *many* never attend. There is, however, a gradual improvement, which I earnestly trust will continue until all who are remiss will be of our number. I think the children of our Sunday-School and of the members of the Church should worship with their parents, and regret that some have been allowed to wander in other directions. A great influence for good is thus lost, especially at our Children's Church service—which has ever received so much of my attention; our

own scholars should always be present, accompanied if possible by their parents. I have visited during the past year every family at least once, many several times, always making the greatest number of visits to the sick, poor, and afflicted. Many of my ministrations have been with those having no connection with our Parish; I never refuse to respond to a call of sorrow if I can say yes, or if the clergyman can be found whose duty it is to look after the suffering one. In reviewing the Reports, and from personal knowledge, I find that no one having a claim upon us has suffered from want, every proper call being promptly relieved. It will be considerable help to me to receive—and it is the duty of every member of the Association, if in possession of facts relative to those in need, to give me—the information at once. You will remember that the only fund provided by the Church for the assistance of its communicant members is the offertory at the Communion; this, in proportion to the attendance, is too small. The demands upon me are constant, and such as I ought to meet; so if you are forgetful of your duty at such a time, you can readily see the embarrassment with which I must contend. I am only entitled, for the poor, to the money on the plates outside of the envelopes at the morning service on Communion Sunday, when it is expected that all—the communicants especially—will, in addition to their weekly contribution, give their portion for the suffering ones.

I feel, at the commencement of another year, that we have much to encourage us. The Committees and members have faithfully discharged their duties, and ever and anon one comes out here and there to join in the good work. I know of no congregation of equal size that has any more working element—if as much—as ours, and under God we will utilize it until all through this neighborhood a mighty army shall rise up to do battle for the Lord. To my statistics for the year, and for my rectorship, I will add those since the organization of the Parish, and with my prayer for God's blessing upon you, and that all shall be done to His glory, I remain your Pastor,

GEORGE BRINGHURST.

The Accounting Warden reports the following statement of his accounts for 1883:

RECEIPTS.

Through the Revenue-Envelope System,	$435.49
Collections at Church Services,	219.09
Subscribers in the Parish,	423.04
" outside the Parish,	348.33
Sunday-School,	31.06
Entertainments—Parish Association Treasurer,	363.12
Special Contributions collected by a lady member of the Parish for New Carpet for Church—Parish Association Treasurer,	154.05
From the Pledges,	251.00
	$2,225.18

EXPENDITURES.

Rector's Salary, less his contribution of $300,	$1,200.00
Organist and Sexton's Salaries, and Summer Supply,	339.17
Fourteen tons of Coal,	98.25
Materials for Lighting and Cleaning,	30.62
Revenue-Envelopes and Printing,	16.25
Alterations and Repairs,	113.10
Improving Grounds about the Church,	256.95
New Carpet for Church,	154.05
Insurance,	2.97
Convention Fund,	10.00
Balance on hand,	3.82
	$2,225.18

It may be well to call attention to the fact that the support of the Church for 1883 required really but $1,768.91, the additional $456.27 having been specially raised by entertainments and contributions for the improvement of the Church grounds, extra repairs to furnaces, etc., and the purchase of the new carpet for the Church.

In this connection, we may well speak of the much-needed repairs now required, such as painting the exterior of both our buildings, renewing some of the window-frames, strengthening the roof of the Sunday-School building, etc., which it should be our aim to supply the necessary funds for during this year; and our success in this direction last year will encourage us in so doing. We have reason to thank God for this encouraging Report, and for the fact—as stated by the Rector at the beginning of the new year—that our Church is out of debt: we have no mortgages, or ground-rents, or any other encumbrances of a financial nature.

The following is an estimated statement of the revenue and expenses of the present year:

EXPENSES.

For the support of the Church for 1884, ...	$1,750.00

REVENUE, ESTIMATED.

Promised from Seventy-three envelope-subscribers, . . .	$450.96
Collections at Church Services, ...	220.00
Subscribers in the Parish, ...	425.00
" outside the Parish, ...	315.00
Sunday-School, ...	30.00
Apparent Deficit, ...	309.04
	$1,750.00

All the members of the Congregation have not yet reported relative to their subscriptions to the Church support, and we shall in all probability add quite a number to our list of envelope-subscribers; and a plan is in contemplation of adding to the duties of the Committee on District Visiting that of asking for monthly or other subscriptions to the support of the Church from those who do not now contribute anything.

The Treasurer of the Association reports:

Balance on hand from Fair held November, 1882, ...	$160.37
Entertainment, May 17th, 1883, ...	69.10
" Parvin Hall, May 31st, 1883, ...	72.75
Special Contributions to Church Carpet, ...	154.05
Children's Old Folks Concert, ...	60.90
	$517.17

PAYMENTS.

Accounting Warden, from Entertainments, ...	$60.90
Repairs to Church Property, ...	45.27
Grading and Sodding Church Grounds, Making Circular Road, etc., ...	256.95
Church Carpet, ...	154.05
	$517.17

The work of the Association, as confided to the several Committees:

FIRST.—*Sunday-School Committee.*

Number on the Roll—

Officers and Teachers, ...	21	
Main School and Bible-Classes, ...	138	
Infant School, ...	78	
		237
Last year, ...		222
Average attendance during the year, ...		145
" " last year, ...		133
The largest attendance was July 1st, ...		186
The smallest attendance was April 29th (stormy), ...		71

There have been six deaths during the year.

The Twenty-second Anniversary of the Sunday-School was celebrated on Easter afternoon, when the Church was crowded to its utmost capacity; and never, in the opinion of many present, were the exercises more earnest or enjoyable.

The Annual Excursion was held July 7th, at Neshaminy Falls: a day of pleasure to the two hundred and eighty-three participants, owing to the beautiful weather, and in a large measure to the generally unselfish conduct of all present.

The usual Christmas Celebration was held Friday evening, December 28th, after a most successful oyster-supper in the Sunday-School building, prepared by the teachers and a few friends, aided by many liberal donations from friends in and out of the Parish. The members of the Sunday-School were invited, and one hundred and eighty responded; this new departure from our former plan has resulted in an increased interest in all the services of the Parish.

The offerings of the Sunday-School are appropriated as follows:

First Sunday of the month, ...	The Poor of the School.
Second Sunday of the month, ...	Missions and Charities.
Third Sunday of the month, ...	Support of the Church.
Fourth and Fifth Sunday of the month,	Expenses of the School.

These evidences of outward growth are gratifying, but we are assured of a spiritual one—which is better, and for which we are devoutly thankful—from the seriousness pervading the school, and from the fact that at the last Confirmation six of the candidates were from the Sunday-School.

The Library contains three hundred and fifty volumes, many of which are old, and seldom if ever read. We need a replenishing in this direction, and expect it, as we understand the collections during the week-night services through Lent are to be devoted to the support of the Sunday-School, and we hope the Congregation will be generous in their gifts on these occasions.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TREASURER'S REPORT.

Balance on hand from 1882,	$2 00
From Collections and Contributions,	226.24
Balance due Treasurer,	28.07
	$256.31

EXPENDITURES.

Lesson-Papers, Easter and Christmas Celebrations, Flowers sent to Funerals of deceased Scholars, Library Books, etc,	$177.38
Poor of the Sunday-School,	16 94
Missions and Charities,	30.92
Support of the Church,	31.07
	$256.31

SECOND COMMITTEE.—*Church Hospitality.*

Report that strangers attending our services have been kindly received, and furnished with comfortable seats. It could accomplish more with a larger corps of workers, and would suggest that the Rector please ask those adapted to the work to join us.

THIRD COMMITTEE.—*District Visiting.*

This work has been effectually accomplished, and with increased interest among the Congregation will prove the most valuable adjunct in gathering many souls into the Church. Over fifty visits have been made, and in all cases gave mutual satisfaction. In some cases new scholars were found, and several suffering families, which were relieved. There is room for many other visitors, and it is hoped the list will at once be filled.

FOURTH COMMITTEE.—*Sewing Meetings.*

These have been regularly held, with an average attendance of twenty. Over two hundred garments have been distributed,

and ten sold. Five suppers were given during the year, which were attended by an average of thirty. Several donations in goods and forty-five dollars in money were gratefully received, and appropriated accordingly. The Committee look upon these weekly meetings as highly beneficial, promoting a feeling of sociability and giving respite to many a weary and overworked person, encouraging a faithful attendance upon the services of the Sanctuary. They extend a cordial invitation to all that possibly can to attend the meeting, which is held on Thursday afternoon, at three o'clock.

FIFTH COMMITTEE.—*Social and Literary.*

Report that five free entertainments have been given, at which collections were taken, amounting to twenty-five dollars. On November 27th they gave a delightful entertainment, consisting of a Children's Old Folks Concert; the performers were girls and boys from our Sunday-School, successfully instructed and trained by Miss Annie Evans, who in a magnanimous manner gave her services night after night for several weeks. The audience numbered over three hundred, which literally packed the Sunday-School building. The net proceeds amounted to $60.90, which was appropriated to the deficiency in the Church support. Almost all the material for these entertainments has been furnished by the Sunday-Scholars.

There have been, during 1883:

Number of Services held,	160
Infant Baptisms,	31
Adult Baptisms,	4
Confirmed,	8
Funerals attended,	10
Marriages solemnized,	6
Present number of Communicants, about	90
Amount of Offertory at Communion,	$61.08

During my Rectorship of nine years, the summary of its statistics is as follows:

Infant Baptisms,	136
Adult Baptisms,	11
Confirmed,	95
Funerals,	57
Marriages,	28

Since the organization of the Parish, in 1861:

Infant Baptisms,	336
Adult Baptisms,	14
Confirmed,	154
Funerals,	109
Marriages,	39

Consolidating the various Treasurers' Reports, we have the following totals:

RECEIPTS.

From all sources—Subscribers, Collections, Entertainments, Pledges, etc.,	$2,608.59

PAYMENTS.

Support of the Church,	$1,697.26	
Repairs, Improvements to Church Grounds, New Carpet, etc.,	524.10	
Support of the Sunday-School,	177.38	
Missions and Charities,	150.00	
Distribution of Communion-Alms,	57.08	
Sewing Meeting, Cash disbursements,	6.25	
		$2,612.07
General Deficit,		$3.48

ACCOUNTED FOR.

Sunday-School Expense Account, Deficit,		$44.60	
Accounting Warden, Balance,	$3.82		
Communion-Alms, Balance,	4.00		
Sewing-Meeting Treasurer, Balance,	33.30		
		41.12	
			$3.48